

THE PAPERS OF

Jefferson Davis

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*A complete edition of Davis' works and papers, plus the important correspondence to him,
sponsored by Rice University and published by the Louisiana State University Press.*

March 29, 1984

Dear Sally,

Since that lovely tea on your porch I have been pouring over the old letters and newspapers and journals with great pleasure. James Autry's November 17, 1862, letter to his wife is so moving that I have made a photostat and a transcription of it for you to have, or pass on to the granddaughter who is a history buff. If she would like the original, I will be glad to return it to you.

We missed you at the Discussion Group yesterday; in fact, I had this little package for you there. I hope we will see you at the next meeting, but in the meantime, thank you again for a delightful visit.

Fondly,

Mary

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Jackson Miss

Nov 17th/62 Monday Morning

My dear Jeanie

An opportunity presents itself to get a letter to you. I have suffered much in mind since I left you & would now give any consideration for a letter from you.

After leaving home I came down to Abbeville - remained there during Sunday & then went by way of Grenada to Brohon' where I remained overnight. Found Sister Martha & family well but much perplexed to know where to go & what to do. I dont think they will go to Texas - Brohon is in favor of going to Calhoun County with most of his force, but is unfixed in any plan for the future. I met Frank there & came with him to Panola town where his Regt is encamped. He is well pleased with his position of private- he belongs to the same Company but is now at home on furlough. I have endeavoured to get some one to go into Washington Co after our negroes & to deliver them to Brohon but can not get any one to go. I have written to Brohon requesting him to send for them & to do with them as he does with his own. They are nearly all women & children & therefore would not be so apt to run away. I am much perplexed about them & will feel very uneasy until I hear what is to become of them. I hope Brohon however will attend to the matter for me. But this does not give me half a one hundredth part of the uneasiness that your situation does.

I cant believe that our army will pull back any further south. Holly Springs will therefore be the debateable point

where both armies will have occasional skirmishes. I fear much confusion there on Christmas & oh it almost runs me crazy to think that you & Ma will be cut off from me & perhaps treated cruelly. Now my advice is, & I hope Ma will reflect & act upon it, this- If you see that dangers threaten you either from the enemy or otherwise dont hesitate to give up home & furniture & come South. Better that property and everything of the kind should perish than that either one of you should suffer indignities outrages & cruelty. You can call on any of my friends for assistance & must not hesitate to ask for the loan of money if you need it. In case of an emergency both you & Ma can come down to Mr Cheathan' in Yazoo County. He & his family would doubtless be glad to see Ma & you too. To reach his house you get off the Miss Central RR at Vaughns Station 20 miles from Canton & he lives between that point & Yazoo City some 5 or 6 miles from the main road - or you can go to Calhoun with Brohon if he goes there. Both he & Sister Martha are exceedingly anxious to have you & Ma with them. Let Aunt Tildy & Andy take possession of the house. Tell Ma to send Tom & Harriet South if they are willing to go but not to force them to leave unless it can be securely done. Tom could get employment here or any where south & so could Harriet. Tell the negroes for me that I have always been kind to them - that they have never suffered for any thing in life - that I now rely on them to protect my family - that if freedom is all they want say so & they may go - but that when they leave home they leave to be kicked around & murdered by the poor whites of the North & will soon regret that they are not back at home. Let them tell the Feds that

they are free if they take possession of Holly Spring. I endeavoured to get Nash to go with me to the Army but the R Road will not release him. I will therefore have to take Henry. Mr. Courtney, who has our negroes in Washington Co has notified me to take them away. I have, as I said above, requested Brohon to send for them - hope he will do so - I have not time, as I am under orders, to remain long enough to attend to them.

Did Sister get off? I am exceedingly anxious to know. I will leave here for Chattanooga, where I learn my Regt is, to-morrow. Direct all your letters to me at Chattanooga. My Command is 27th Miss Regt, 4 Brigade, Anderson Division.

I have every confidence, my own dear, darling wife, in your good sense & judgment & you will now have to act in obedience to the dictates of that judgment. Nerve yourself to understand all hardships & trials & never forget that you are in the hands of a just God who doeth all things well. I pray Heaven that we may soon be again together to enjoy that peace & happiness that was once ours. I cannot doubt that we will again meet - the doubt would render me miserable & I will not think or write about it. You know, my darling, the deep devotion of my heart - you know that you have a husband who gives to you his whole heart - that with you he is happy without you life is to him but a burthen & the grave would be to him a place of - but I wont write thus --

A thousand kisses to my dear boy - talk to him of me - teach him to be upright, candid, honest, virtuous, brave & above all teach him to be truthful. Teach him to suffer every privation, all kinds of sufferings even death itself matters.

rather than to tell a falsehood. Dont let him become of an envious or jealous disposition - such a disposition renders the posse[ssor] a man of misery & unfit to enjoy life here or hereafter. Never deceive him in any thing - if you promise him any thing always fulfil it even in the most trivial matters.

Say to Jimmy G. if he is with you, that an awful responsibility rests upon his shoulders. God has blessed with with a bright intellect in return for which he is to be placed in a position of responsibility. A pure, noble, intellectual mother leans on him for consolation & happiness. If he fails in any particular to render obedience, respect & love to such a mother as sure as there is a just God in Heaven just so sure will he be punished. Tell him that God has so conducted matters as to place the happiness of that noble mother within his keeping & if he fails he will be cursed while living & when dead will meet with a terrible hereafter. God has peculiarly blessed him with intellect & he in return will have to guide that intellect so as to place it in the way of usefulness.

Tell Laura I have every confidence in her - that she must be a good gil & she will never regret it.

If you need any assistance here call on Capt. T. C. McMacken or Gov Pettus or any of my friends dont hesitate to borrow money if you need it. If the Federals take possession of Holly Springs you know how to conduct yourself.

Kiss my dear mother for me - oh how often will I send my thoughts to you & her.

And now, my own dearest one, farewell. God, unto whom
all secrets are known & from whom all good cometh, unto Thee
I commit my wife, my child & my mother - farewell

Your ever devoted husband.

Arthur
17/6/62 Monday Morning

My dear Anne

The children's presents they to go

a little to you. I have written much in mine since

last you knowed now you may see some of it in the

from you.

After leaving home I have seen to Anne

and Anne then evening Sunday & then went by

way of London to Bristol where I have seen

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[illegible]

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